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United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Patrick **Chuasoto** (Philippines)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2008, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "United Nations common system" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. The Fifth Committee considered the item at its 12th and 28th meetings, on 27 October and 23 December 2008. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/63/SR.12 and 28).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2008;[1]

(b) Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly concerning the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2008 (A/63/360);

(c) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the statement submitted by the Secretary-General concerning the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2008 (A/63/501).

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 30* (A/63/30).

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II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/63/L.10

4. At its 28th meeting, on 23 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission" (A/C.5/63/L.10), submitted by the Chairman of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations coordinated by the representative of the Netherlands.

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/63/L.10 without a vote (see para. 7).

6. The recommendation of the Fifth Committee on the statement submitted by the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2008 (A/63/360) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/63/501) will be contained in the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 118, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009".

III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

7. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/198 of 21 December 1989, 51/216 of 18 December 1996, 52/216 of 22 December 1997, 53/209 of 18 December 1998, 55/223 of 23 December 2000, 56/244 of 24 December 2001, 57/285 of 20 December 2002, 58/251 of 23 December 2003, 59/268 of 23 December 2004, 61/239 of 22 December 2006, and 62/227 and 62/238 of 22 December 2007,

Having considered the report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 2008,[1]

Reaffirming its commitment to a single, unified United Nations common system as the cornerstone for the regulation and coordination of the conditions of service of the United Nations common system,

Reaffirming the statute of the Commission[2] and the central role of the Commission and the General Assembly in the regulation and coordination of the conditions of service of the United Nations common system,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work of the International Civil Service Commission;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the Commission for the year 2008;[1]

3. *Reiterates its invitation* to the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to urge the heads of the organizations of the United Nations common system to fully support the work of the Commission, in conformity with its statute,[2] by providing it with relevant information in a timely manner for studies that it conducts under its statutory responsibilities for the common system, as well as by other possible means;

4. *Encourages* the Commission to continue to coordinate and regulate the conditions of service of staff of the common system organizations, bearing in mind the limitations imposed by Member States on their national civil services;

5. *Recalls* article 28 of the statute of the International Civil Service Commission;

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 30* (A/63/30).

[2] Resolution 3357 (XXIX), annex.

A
Conditions of service for both categories of staff

1. Education grant

1. *Approves*, with effect from the school year in progress on 1 January 2009, the recommendations of the Commission in paragraph 62 of its report[1] and annex II thereto;

2. *Requests* the Commission to report on the methodological review of the education grant, for consideration at its sixty-fifth session;

2. Performance management

1. *Reiterates* the importance of developing mechanisms for better differentiating levels of performance;

2. *Requests* the Commission to work closely with organizations to identify workable means of rewarding performance;

3. *Welcomes* the work of the Commission in benchmarking innovative practices in the area of performance management, and encourages the Commission to keep performance management under review;

4. *Requests* the Commission to submit an updated performance management framework for its consideration;

B
Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories

1. Evolution of the margin

Recalling section I.B of its resolution 51/216 and the standing mandate from the General Assembly, in which the Commission is requested to continue its review of the relationship between the net remuneration of the United Nations staff in the Professional and higher categories in New York and that of the comparator civil service (the United States federal civil service) employees in comparable positions in Washington, D.C. (referred to as "the margin"),

1. *Notes* that the margin between net remuneration of the United Nations staff in grades P-1 to D-2 in New York and that of officials in comparable positions in the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2008 is estimated at 114.7 and that the average margin level for the past five years (2004-2008) stands at 112.9;

2. *Reaffirms* that the range of 110 to 120 for the margin between the net remuneration of officials in the Professional and higher categories of the United Nations in New York and officials in comparable positions in the comparator civil service should continue to apply, on the understanding that the margin would be maintained at a level around the desirable midpoint of 115 over a period of time;

2. Base/floor salary scale

Recalling its resolution 44/198, by which it established a floor net salary level for staff in the Professional and higher categories by reference to the corresponding

base net salary levels of officials in comparable positions serving at the base city of the comparator civil service (the United States federal civil service),

Approves, with effect from 1 January 2009, as recommended by the Commission in paragraph 79 of its report,[1] the revised base/floor scale of gross and net salaries for staff in the Professional and higher categories contained in annex IV to the report;

3. Children's and secondary dependant's allowances

Approves, with effect from 1 January 2009, as recommended by the Commission in paragraph 129 of its report,[1] the revised flat-rate allowance and the transitional measure referred thereto;

4. Mobility/hardship

1. *Recognizes* the hardship conditions under which staff members are often required to perform their official duties, and the personal disruption that operationally required mobility may impose on staff;

2. *Approves*, with effect from 1 January 2009, as recommended by the Commission in paragraph 94 of its report,[1] the revised level of the hardship, mobility and non-removal allowances;

3. *Welcomes* the intent of the Commission to review whether the mobility/hardship continues to fulfil the purposes for which it was established;

4. *Encourages* the Commission to further refine the mobility/hardship scheme in order to foster, in particular, the achievement of organizational objectives;

5. *Requests* the Commission to report on the outcome of its planned review of the mobility/hardship scheme at its sixty-fifth session for its consideration;

5. Gender balance/geographical balance

1. *Notes with disappointment* the insufficient progress made with regard to the representation of women in the organizations of the United Nations common system, and in particular their significant underrepresentation at senior levels;

2. *Notes* the decisions of the Commission contained in paragraph 109 of its report;[1]

3. *Invites* the Commission to continue to monitor future progress in achieving gender balance, including the aspect of regional representation if it deems appropriate, and to make recommendations on practical steps that should be taken to improve the representation of women in the organizations of the United Nations common system;

C

Conditions of service of staff in the General Service and other locally recruited categories

Review of the methodology for surveys of best prevailing conditions of employment at headquarters and non-headquarters duty stations

Notes paragraph 148 of the report of the Commission,[1] and requests the Commission to report on the methodological review at its sixty-fourth session;

D

Conditions of service in the field

1. Effectiveness and impact of recruitment and retention measures at difficult duty stations

1. *Welcomes* the decision of the Commission to undertake a global staff survey to complement the findings of its studies;

2. *Invites* the Commission to conduct similar staff surveys periodically in support of its work, as well as any follow-up surveys;

3. *Requests* the Commission to continue its consideration of issues related to recruitment and retention and to report thereon as appropriate.

2. Hazard pay for internationally recruited staff

Expresses its appreciation for staff who live and work under hazardous conditions in the service of the United Nations;

E

Strengthening of the international civil service

Reaffirming that the staff is an invaluable asset of the Organization, and commending its contribution to furthering the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

1. *Emphasizes* that the capacity of the Commission as a source of technical expertise and policy advice should be further strengthened;

2. *Stresses* that the work of the Commission shall be given the importance and attention it deserves by the governing bodies of the organizations of the common system;

3. *Requests* the Commission to closely monitor the developments in the organizations of the United Nations system in order to insure the effective regulation and coordination of the conditions of service in the United Nations common system;

4. *Notes* the decision of the Commission to keep the senior management network programme under review, and, bearing in mind paragraph 178 of its report,[1] requests the International Civil Service Commission to monitor the envisaged redesigning of the senior management programme and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.